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In 3Hh
Housekeepers' Chat

Monday, February 23, 1931.

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

Subject: "Laundering Bedding." Information approved by the Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. D. A.

Bulletin Available: "Methods and Equipment for Home Laundering."

Since today is Monday; since the weatherman assures me that winter is really almost gone and spring is well on its way; since my friends keep asking questions about scientific laundering-- since all these things, how about a brief chat about special spring laundering problems? I'll give you these tips ahead of time, so that when warm weather steals upon us some day soon, you'll be all ready to wash your comforters, blankets and pillows in proper style and put them away before a single moth has made a move to go out after them. Moths, you know, will condescend to eating clean wool blankets but they dearly love a feast of soiled wool. How they do enjoy a good browse on a blanket that has been used hard all winter! The only way to outwit the moth is to have the blankets all clean before they are put away and then wrap each blanket separately in newspaper or wrapping paper and pack them where not one little miller can get in and lay an egg. But that's enough about moths today since tomorrow I'm planning to give you a serious talk on how to keep moths out of your upholstered furniture. Moths can ruin your best davenport just by being themselves and munching away at the handsome mohair covering. I have a friend who had a very sad experience with a moth and a davenport-- but I'll tell you all about that tomorrow. There seems to be something in the atmosphere that makes me constantly wander away from the subject.

And the subject just now is how to wash pillows and comforters, a special problem since these articles cannot be conveniently handled in the routine wash. It will probably be the best plan to set apart a separate day for this job. It is a good idea to choose a clear windy day so that the drying can be done rapidly outside. If you have a washing machine, so much the better.

The methods of washing pillows and comforters are much the same. Use moderately hot water, that is, about 120 degrees-- 130 degrees F. Yes, indeed. Why not be scientific and use a thermometer in laundering just as you do in cooking? Most accurate results are obtained that way. Use a mild or neutral soap in either flake or jellied form and gradually add enough to produce a good permanent suds. Of course, you know that flake or jelly soap goes into solution most readily, thus saving time and effort and making the best suds. The washing period should be about 15 or 20 minutes, depending upon how soiled the article is. Pillows, if they are of the average bed size, must be washed singly. Squeeze, but don't rub them in the suds; then rinse them twice or three times in water of the same temperature as the washing water. Then put them outdoors in the sun and air to dry. During the drying of both pillows and comforters change

their position and shake them frequently to fluff up and redistribute the filling. As a finishing touch, comforters may be pressed with a warm iron to smooth the outer covering.

Comforters filled with cotton batting rather than down do not wash very successfully because the batting is inclined to mat when it is wet and is very hard to redistribute. A dimity cover that can be removed and laundered frequently will keep them clean.

So much for the pillows and comforters. Now I'll tell you what I know about washing blankets. I've washed a lot of blankets in my life, I might add, but I've always had the best results by following the directions of the specialists in this line, so I'm giving them to you.

Wool blankets should be washed according to the rules for all wool garments. Plenty of lukewarm suds. Squeeze the suds through the blanket but never rub. Gently squeeze out the suds but never use any harsh wringing either by hand or through a wringer. If the blankets are very soiled give them a second washing just like the first using clean thick suds. Rinse them at least twice in clear water of exactly the same temperature as the wash water and use a squeezing motion in the rinsing. In hanging the blankets over the line, see that they are placed so that one-half their weight is on either side. Avoid using clothes pins unless they are protected by an extra cloth or piece of paper underneath. If the blankets have colored stripes which show a tendency to run, hang them so that the stripes are vertical. Then, if the color runs, it will run down the stripe and will not go into the blanket.

No! I haven't forgotten about the cotton blankets. But I'll have to be brief. Time is flying and I wouldn't miss giving you the menu and recipe today for anything. If you'll get your pencils and papers out of the desk drawer, I'll be ready with that menu in a minute.

Blankets of cotton depend for their warmth upon the tiny air cells in the fibers. This still air holds the warmth under the blanket in and the cold outside out. The method of laundering, therefore, must preserve these air cells or the blanket will not be so efficient. So here's the way to launder the blanket: Wash quickly, dry quickly and handle as little as possible. Wash in water 110 - 120 degrees F. and use mild soap which will go into solution quickly. Rinse in at least two clear warm waters. In drying, hang this cotton blanket out doors and allow it to whip dry. If it is not possible to hang it out, squeeze out the water but do not twist it.

All right. Now the menu: Pot roast of beef with brown gravy; Mashed Potatoes; Buttered Beets; Combination vegetable salad; and Sponge for dessert.

The recipe for pot roast is in your beef leaflet but, for the sake of those who have not yet written for this leaflet, I'm going to give it to you.

Cuts of beef suitable for pot roasting are chuck ribs, cross arm, clod, round, and rump. Select a piece from 4 to 6 pounds in weight. Wipe with a damp cloth. Rub the meat with salt, pepper, and flour. Brown the meat on all sides in a heavy kettle, using about 3 tablespoons of beef fat. Slip a low rack under the meat, add one-half cup of water, cover tightly, and simmer until tender. The time required for cooking can not be definitely stated, but it will probably be about three hours. Turn the roast occasionally. When the meat is

done, remove from the kettle, skim off the excess fat from the liquid, and measure the remainder. For each cup of gravy desired, measure 2 tablespoons of fat are return to the kettle, add 1-1/2 to 2 tablespoons of flour and stir until well blended and slightly browned. Then add 1 cup of the meat stock or of cold water and stir until smooth. Season the gravy with salt, pepper, and chopped parsley. Serve the pot roast on a hot platter with buttered carrots and stuffed onions.

If desired, any of the following vegetables may be cooked in the pot with the roast: Carrots, celery, onions, potatoes, tomatoes, and turnips. Add the vegetables during the last hour of cooking the meat if they are to be served whole or in quarters. If preferred, they may be cooked longer and mashed and served as purée in the gravy.

And the lemon sponge? Another recipe. Seven ingredients. I'll list them.

2 tablespoons of gelatin
1/2 cup of cold water
2 cups of boiling water
1 cup of sugar
Salt
3/4 cup of lemon juice
3 egg whites
I'll list those ingredients once again. (Repeat)

Soften the gelatin in the cold water for 5 minutes. Add the boiling water, sugar, and a few grains of salt and stir until dissolved. Add the lemon juice and chill. When the mixture begins to set, beat well and fold in the stiffly beaten egg whites. Pour into a wet mold and put in a cold place until firm. Turn out on a platter and serve with custard sauce made from the egg yolks.

Tomorrow: Fighting Moths in Upholstered Furniture.

